

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method, comprising:
 - receiving information of an event;
 - determining whether or not the event is of enough importance to the user to contact a first person concerning the event; and
 - if the event is of enough importance to the user, then selecting a first person to contact, selecting a first way to contact the first person, attempting to contact the first person using the first way, and waiting for a period of time for the first person to respond.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
 - selecting a second way to contact the first person and attempting to contact the first person if the event is of enough importance to the user, the first person has not responded within the period of time, and there is a second way to contact the first person that is acceptable; and
 - selecting a second person to contact and a way to contact the second person if the event is of enough importance to the user, the first person has not responded within the period of time, there is not a second way to contact the first person that is acceptable, and there is a way to contact the second person that is acceptable.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein determining whether or not the event is of enough importance to the user comprises comparing the subject of the event to a list of subjects of interest to the user.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein determining whether or not the event is of enough importance to the user comprises comparing the timing of the event to activities in which the user is engaged or will be engaged listed in a calendar.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein determining whether or not the event is of enough importance to the user comprises referring to information concerning the user's preferences to determine if the user would prefer that action be taken on behalf of the user to respond to the event without contacting any person.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein determining whether or not the event is of enough importance to the user comprises referring to information concerning rules specified by the user concerning circumstances in which the user will not permit action to be taken without the first person being contacted.

7. The method of claim 2, wherein selecting the first person and the second person comprises referring to information concerning the user's preferences concerning which persons are to be contacted for particular events.

8. The method of claim 2, wherein selecting the first way to contact the first person and determining whether or not there is a second way to contact the first person that is acceptable comprises referring to information concerning the first person's preferences for when and how the first person would prefer to be contacted.

9. The method of claim 2, wherein selecting the first way to contact the first person and determining whether or not there is a second way to contact the first person that is acceptable comprises referring to information concerning the limitations of each of the available ways to contact the first person.

10. The method of claim 2, wherein selecting the first way to contact the first person and determining whether or not there is a second way to contact the first person that is acceptable comprises referring to rules specified by the first person concerning circumstances under which the first person requires that no attempt be made to contact the first person.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein referring to rules specified by the first person further comprises referring to information exceptions to those rules.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein the first person is selected from the group consisting of the user, a family member of the user, a friend of the user, an employee of the user, and a coworker of the user.

13. The method of claim 1, wherein the first way to contact the first person is selected from the group consisting of a landline telephone, a mobile telephone, a text-enabled mobile phone, a pager, a text-enabled pager, a computer system capable of conveying text messages, a computer system capable of conveying audio messages, and a computer system capable of conveying video messages.

14. A computer readable medium comprising instructions, which when executed by a processor, causes the processor to:

receive information of an event;

determine whether or not the event is important enough to the user to contact a first person concerning the event; and

select a first person to contact, select a first way to contact the first person, attempt to contact the first person using the first way, and wait for a period of time for the first person to respond, if the event is of enough importance to the user.

15. The computer readable medium of claim 14, wherein the processor is further caused to:

select a second way to contact the first person and attempt to contact the first person using the second way if the event is important enough to the user, and the first person has not responded within the period of time, and there is a second way that is acceptable; and

select a second person to contact and a way to contact the second person if the event is important enough to the user, the first person has not responded within the period of time, there is not a second way that is acceptable, and there is a way to contact the second person that is acceptable.

16. The computer readable medium of claim 14, wherein the processor is caused to determine if the event is important enough to the user by comparing the subject of the event to a list of subjects of interest to the user.

17. The computer readable medium of claim 14, wherein the processor is caused to determine if the event is important enough to the user by

comparing the timing of the event to activities in which the user is engaged or will be engaged listed in a calendar.

18. The computer readable medium of claim 14, wherein the processor is caused to determine whether or not the event is important enough to the user by referring to information concerning the user's preferences to determine if the user would prefer that action be taken on behalf of the user to respond to the event without contacting any person.

19. The computer readable medium of claim 14, wherein the processor is caused to determine whether or not the event is important enough to the user by referring to information concerning rules specified by the user concerning circumstances in which the user will not permit action to be taken without the first person being contacted.

20. The computer readable medium of claim 15, wherein the processor is caused to select the first person and the second person by referring to information concerning the user's preferences concerning which persons are to be contacted for particular events.

21. The computer readable medium of claim 15, wherein the processor is caused to select the first way to contact the first person and to determine whether or not there is a second way to contact the first person that is acceptable by referring to information concerning the first person's preferences for when and how the first person would prefer to be contacted.

22. The computer readable medium of claim 15, wherein the processor is caused to select the first way to contact the first person and to determine whether or not there is a second way to contact the first person that is acceptable by referring to information concerning the limitations of each of the available ways to contact the first person.

23. The computer readable medium of claim 15, wherein the processor is caused to select the first way to contact the first person and to determine whether or not there is a second way to contact the first person that is acceptable by referring to rules specified by the first person concerning circumstances under which the first person requires that no attempt be made to contact the first person.

24. The computer readable medium of claim 14, wherein the first person is selected from the group consisting of the user, a family member of the user, a friend of the user, an employee of the user, and a coworker of the user.

25. The computer readable medium of claim 14, wherein the first way to contact the first person is selected from the group consisting of a landline telephone, a mobile telephone, a text-enabled mobile phone, a pager, a text-enabled pager, a computer system capable of conveying text messages, a computer system capable of conveying audio messages, and a computer system capable of conveying video messages.

26. A method, comprising:
receiving information concerning at least one activity in a user's schedule, at least one subject of interest to the user, a first way to contact a first

person selected by the user, at least one preference of the first person for how the first person is to be contacted, and at least one requirement of the first person restricting when the first person may be contacted;

receiving information concerning an event;

referring to the information concerning the at least one activity and the at least one subject of interest to determine if the event is of importance enough to the user to contact the first person; and

referring to the information concerning the first way to contact the first person, the at least one preference and the at least one requirement to determine how to contact the first person.

27. The method of claim 26, wherein the first person is selected from the group consisting of the user, a family member of the user, a friend of the user, an employee of the user, and a coworker of the user.

28. The method of claim 26, wherein the information concerning the first way to contact the first person comprises information concerning limitations of a device used in the at least one way to contact the first person.

29. The method of claim 26, wherein the first way to contact the first person is selected from the group consisting of a landline telephone, a mobile telephone, a text-enabled mobile phone, a pager, a text-enabled pager, a computer system capable of conveying text messages, a computer system capable of conveying audio messages, and a computer system capable of conveying video messages.

30. The method of claim 26, wherein the information concerning the at least one preference comprises a preference in favor of the first way to contact the first person over a second way to contact the first person.